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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

First Named Inventor: Natale Speciale
Application No.: 10/538,547 Group Art Unit: 1763
Filed: June 10, 2005 Examiner: Sylvia MacArthur
Title: SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR A TREATMENT APPARATUS

Mail Stop: **Issue Fee**
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The present communication provides comments on the Examiner's Reasons For Allowance statement for the above-identified application. The Examiner's Reasons For Allowance statement was attached to the Notice of Allowance that was mailed March 5, 2008. This communication is being filed concurrently with the application Issue Fee.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of the claims in this application. On page 4 of the "Notice of Allowability" section, the Examiner provided a statement of Reasons For Allowance. Applicant notes that the Examiner's own statement, which in part paraphrases certain features of the inventions of claims 21 and 43, should not be intended or understood to limit or alter the clear meaning or scope of the claims as allowed. Specifically, allowed claims 21 and 43 each read as follows:

21. A system for an apparatus of the type adapted to treat substrates and/or wafers, the system comprising a stationary base element and a movable support for at least one substrate or at least one wafer, the support being rotatable above the element about a stationary axis, the element including a chamber being provided between the element and the support, and at least one duct being provided for the admission of at least one gas-flow to the chamber in order to raise the

support, the system comprising means for converting the flow of gas into the chamber into rotation of the support, said means comprising a plurality of channels each of which is defined between the element and the support and is in communication with the chamber, and each of said channels has a shape and size such that the gas that is present in the chamber, as a result of inward flow of the gas, flows through the channels as a result of pressure in the chamber and causes the support to rotate as a result of fluid-dynamic drive characterized in that each of said channels has a depth that gradually reduces along its extent in a direction away from the said chamber.

43. A system for an apparatus of the type adapted to treat substrates and/or wafers, the system comprising a stationary base element and a movable support for at least one substrate or at least one wafer, the support being rotatable above the element about a stationary axis, the element including a chamber being provided between the element and the support, and at least one duct being provided for the admission of at least one gas-flow to the chamber in order to raise the support, the system comprising means for converting the flow of gas into the chamber into rotation of the support, said means comprising a plurality of channels each of which is defined between the element and the support, each of the channels extending from the chamber and terminating short of an outer groove of the stationary base element, each channel having a shape and size such that the gas that is present in the chamber, as a result of inward flow of the gas, flows through the channels as a result of pressure in the chamber and causes the support to rotate as a result of fluid-dynamic drive characterized in that each of said channels has a depth that gradually reduces along its extent in a direction away from the said chamber.

In addition, on page 4 of the "Notice of Allowability" section, in the Examiner's statement of Reasons For Allowance, Examiner notes that "[t]he prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest...". Such "prior art of record" is presumed to include the references disclosed on each of the three 1449 forms forwarded with the Notice of Allowance, as each of the three 1449 forms were electronically signed by Examiner, with their respective dates of consideration each being "February 26, 2008", which was prior to the date on the Notice of Allowance (i.e., March 5, 2008). While one of the three 1449 forms does not include the Examiner's initials by each of the cited references thereon, at the bottom of each page of that one 1449 form, the

Examiner notes "ALL REFERENCES CONSIDERED EXCEPT WHERE LINED THROUGH", followed by Examiner's initials "SM". Further, that one 1449 form, as described above, is electronically signed by Examiner, with the date of consideration indicated as "February 26, 2008". Because no references on that one 1449 form were lined through, Applicant concluded that all references cited on that one 1449 form were considered as indicated. Examiner confirmed this to be the case in a subsequent discussion between Examiner and Applicant's attorney, John Parzych, on April 29, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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